

"We need another airport. And if we build it, we can create 15,000 jobs in an area of our state that desperately needs jobs.

"So I say, let's build the Peotone Airport.

"Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr.'s plan to build the Abraham Lincoln National Airport at Peotone will not compete with O'Hare for needed federal dollars, and during tough fiscal times like these, his plan to use private investment is both a welcome and innovative way to build an airport.

"I strongly support it. And I hope you do too."

Governor Rob Blagojevich

Governor's State of the State Address, February 3, 2005

*"It is not enough to do the right thing. You have to let people -- **'the***

right people'

-- know you are doing the right thing."

-- Joliet Herald News

Editorial, February 16, 2005***

Congressman Jesse L. Jackson Jr. today said, "Before and since this year's State of the State address, Governor Blagojevich led me to believe that he supported our efforts to resolve Illinois' aviation crunch and create balanced economic growth for the South Side and south suburbs by committing himself to create 15,000 new jobs by the year 2009.

"As I've said many times, some southern suburbs have 60 people for every job, while some northwest suburbs have three jobs for every person.

"But it is becoming clear to me now that many people, including Gov. Blagojevich, may be more concerned about the '**right people**' controlling the project than in creating jobs.

"Ironically, the **right people** did not support this project 10 years ago, nor do they now. The **right people**

never took the initiative to create an airport authority. The

right people

never came up with an airport plan. The

right people

never conceived a public-private partnership to build the airport. The

right people

never conducted a worldwide search for qualified developers. The

right people

never found money to pay for an airport. The

right people

never submitted an airport layout plan to IDOT or the FAA. The

right people

never lobbied in Springfield or Washington for an airport. The

right people

never forfeited other infrastructure projects and committed \$75 million of their Illinois First funds to buy land for the airport. The

right people

never secured \$10 million in state funds for a new interchange on I-57 to access the airport. The

right people

never secured federal funds to extend the Metra line to the airport. The

right people

never received an endorsement from the Governor to build the airport. The

right people

never even stood up to say they supported the airport during their election campaigns.

"So, it would be absurd and ridiculous for anyone to assume that we would take 10 years of careful planning, thorough due diligence, and non-stop effort and hand it over to any so-called '**right people**'

whose agenda for the same 10 years has been solely to stop me.

"In 1995, Governor Jim Edgar called for a special election and I ran for my first public office on a pro-airport platform, and I defeated Emil Jones, who opposed the airport.

"Debbie Halvorson likes to say she was a housewife when she ran for state senate in 1996, and I supported her.

"I worked with Governor George Ryan to secure \$75 million to purchase land for the airport.

"Five years ago, then-Congressman Blagojevich said he was running for governor and asked for my support. During that campaign, he called himself a Peotone Democrat.

"This year, Governor Blagojevich endorsed our plan at the State of the State address. Now I am being told that I am not the **right people**.

"The Abraham Lincoln Airport project is on its way to Ford's Theatre to be assassinated. This project represents the future hopes and dreams of 500,000 people. There's an old proverb that the best welfare program is a job. This airport represents 15,000 jobs. If this project fails at the 11th hour, I can only say that words cannot express my sense of disappointment with the State's leaders if they continue waiting around for all the so-called **right people**," Jackson said.